AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method of treating a subject having a hematologic malignancy with high levels of circulating tumor cells in the blood, wherein said hematologic malignancy is characterized by a white blood cell count from about 4×10^9 to about 200×10^9 ~~associated with at least about 40×10^9~~ white blood cells per liter of blood, said method comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of an anti-CD20 antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof, said amount being effective to achieve a reduction in circulating tumor cells.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said malignancy is a leukemia.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said malignancy is B-prolymphocytic leukemia (B-PLL) or chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL).

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said antibody is a chimeric, humanized or human anti-CD20 antibody.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said antibody is administered at a dosage ranging from 0.1 to 30 mg/kg.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein said dosage is administered weekly for about 2 to 10 weeks.

7. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said antibody is ~~RITUXAN® (~~rituximab~~)~~.

8. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein said antibody is administered in combination with at least one treatment selected from the group consisting of

radiation, chemotherapy, and lymphokine administration, and wherein said lymphokine administration serves to upregulate the expression of CD20 on tumor cells.

9. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein said antibody is administered by infusion at a dosage of 375 mg/m^2 weekly for a total of four weeks.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 8, wherein said lymphokine is selected from the group consisting of IL-4, GM-CSF, TNF-alpha and interferon alpha.

11. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 8, wherein said chemotherapy is selected from the group consisting of chlorambucil (leukemia), prednisone, cyclophosphamide, a combination of cyclophosphamide, vincristine and prednisone (COP), a combination of cyclophosphamide, vincristine, prednisone and doxorubicin (CHOP) and Fludarabine.

12. (Currently amended) A method of treating a subject having a hematologic malignancy with high levels of circulating tumor cells in the blood, wherein said hematologic malignancy is characterized by a white blood cell count from about 4×10^9 to about 200×10^9 ~~associated with at least about 40×10^9~~ white blood cells per liter of blood and wherein the malignancy ~~that~~ is refractory to chemotherapy, said method comprising ~~by~~ administering a therapeutically effective amount of an anti-CD20 antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof, said amount being effective to achieve a reduction in circulating tumor cells.

13. (Previously presented) A method of treating a hematologic malignancy selected from the group consisting of B-prolymphocytic leukemia (B-PLL), chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) and transformed non-Hodgkin's lymphoma by administering a therapeutically effective amount of an anti-CD20 antibody or fragment thereof, said amount being effective to achieve a reduction in circulating tumor cells.

14. (Currently amended) A method of avoiding or reducing the toxicity associated with administration of a therapeutic antibody to patients having a hematological malignancy with high levels of circulating tumor cells in the blood, wherein said hematologic malignancy is characterized by a white blood cell count from about 4×10^9 to about 200×10^9 ~~in associated with at least about 40×10^9~~ white blood cells per liter of blood, said method comprising administering said antibody according to a stepped-up dosage scheme such that infusion-related reactions associated with full dosing are at least substantially avoided.

15. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 14, wherein said antibody binds to CD20.

16. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 15, wherein said antibody is a chimeric antibody.

17. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein said antibody is ~~RITUXAN® (rituximab)~~.

18. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 17, wherein said antibody is administered at an initial dose of 100 mg/m^2, and the remainder of a 375 mg/m^2 dose is administered on the following day.

Claims 19-27, canceled.